

Calcoen.

A NARRATIVE OF THE SECOND
VOYAGE OF VASCO DA
GAMA TO CALICUT.

1502.

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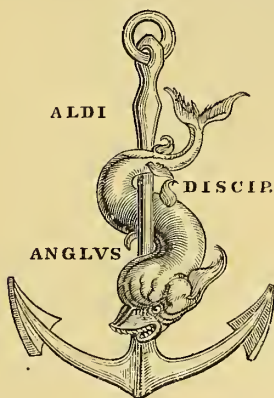
Calcutta

A DUTCH NARRATIVE OF THE SECOND VOYAGE
OF VASCO DA GAMA TO
CALICUT

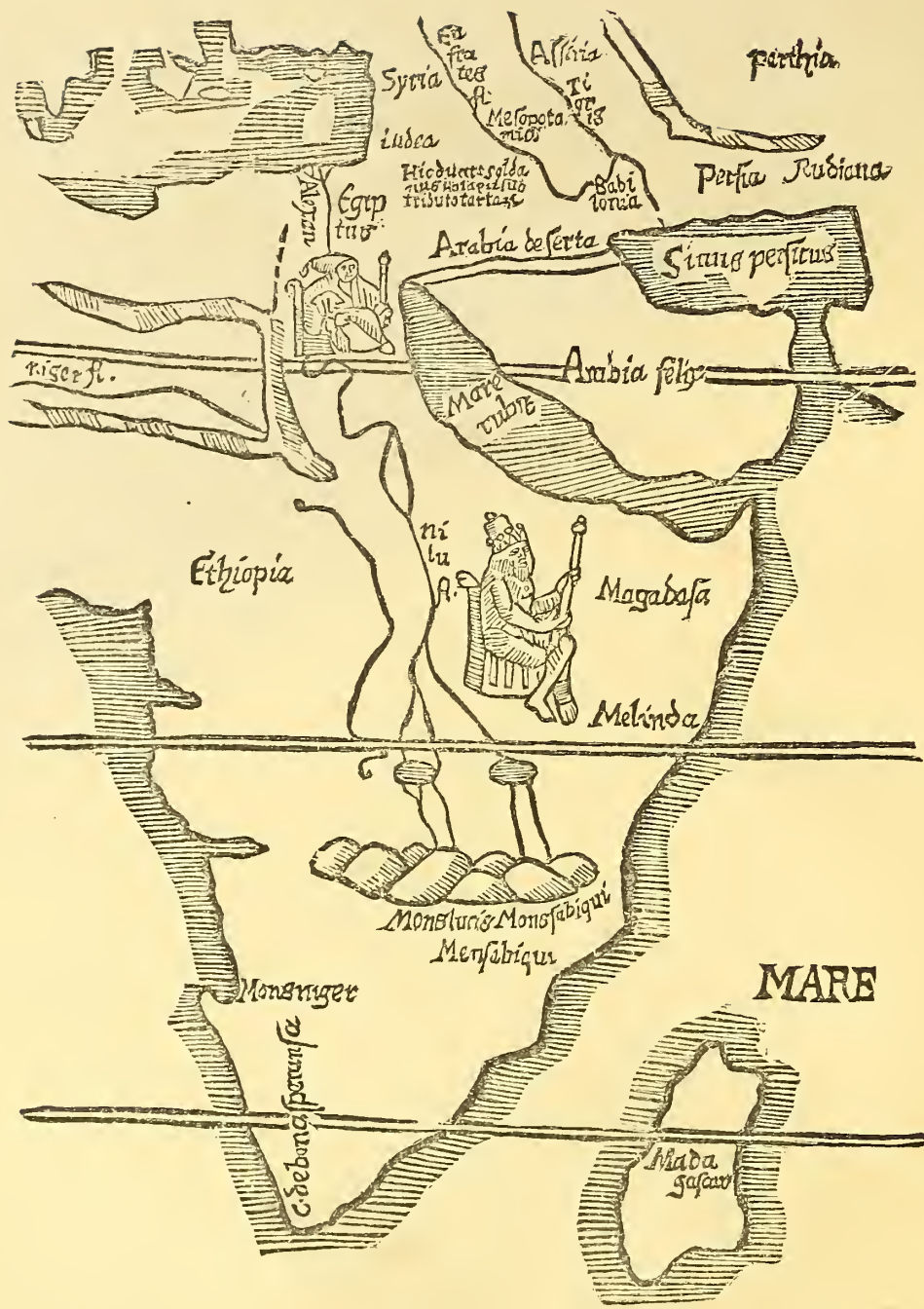
Printed at Antwerp circa 1504

WITH INTRODUCTION AND TRANSLATION

BY J. Ph. BERJEAU



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Introduction.



THE name of Vasco da Gama is not even mentioned in the following narrative, but there is no doubt it applies to the second voyage of the great navigator to India ; and as the book is no translation of any previous work in Portuguese, Spanish, or Italian, we must come to the conclusion it was written by a Dutch officer or sailor, who took an active part in the expedition. The dates, events, and places mentioned agree with all we know of the second voyage of the Portuguese Admiral, whilst our narrative, until now unnoticed by bibliographers, supplies interesting details unmentioned by Galvão, Ramusio, Castanheda, Faria, Barros, &c.

Some ten years ago a well-known bibliophile, who had the book, asked me to translate it for him into French ; I did so hastily, and was not quite satisfied with my translation. But having had lately the good fortune to find again the original and my translation bound together in the British Museum, and the trustees

of the great English national library having kindly allowed me to take a fac-simile of it, I am enabled to offer the public a reproduction of this interesting document, with an improved translation into English.

The book begins with a "hors d'œuvre" personal to the writer, and relating to one of the unfortunate expeditions undertaken by the Portuguese on the coast of Barbary against the celebrated Barbarossa, but that is disposed of in half a page.

In so early a narrative of voyage in countries unknown to the author, it was to be expected the names of places could not be accurately written; but with a little trouble it is easy to reconcile the spelling with the modern names.

Thus, the first land seen after the departure from Lisbon, on the 10th of February, 1502, is called *Kenan*, which undoubtedly is Cape Non on the west coast of Africa, opposite the Canaries. The name of Cape Verde, the next station, is omitted, but its distance from Portugal accurately stated. On the 29th of March the expedition lost sight of the Polar star, and on the 2nd of April they were under the Line, and in the southern hemisphere a week later.

Then, they were beaten about by a storm which during twelve days drove them out of their track. Another heavy storm caught them about the stormy cape misnamed that of Good Hope.

On the 14th of June they arrived before *Scafal*

(Sofala), in Kaffir-land, which our author calls the Paepian's country, very likely from the kingdom of Sabia, near by. Vasco da Gama went to Sofala with only four ships, the remainder of his fleet having been ordered to sail direct for Mozambique, which our author calls *Miskebijc*.

On the following 18th of July they left Sofala for *Hylø*, which is a misprint, later corrected in the book as *Kylø*, for Quiloa, where the king was obliged to pay tribute and homage to the King of Portugal.

Melinda, where they should have arrived on the 20th of July, is the next stopping place ; but they missed it and went to the cape of Saint Mary, which must be the Ras Mory, forming the eastern point of the Island of Socotra, and whose Arabic name answers to Cape Saint Mary. The island was then mainly inhabited by Greek Christians. L'abbé Prévost, "Histoire des Voyages," vol. i. p. 80 (La Haye, 1747, 4°), says: "Mais un vent impétueux le poussa huit lieues au-delà de cette ville dans une baie, où il trouva plusieurs vaisseaux Mores et quelques-uns de Calecut dont il se saisit."

There, our author says, they left the country of the Paepians ; for Kaffir-land was at that time supposed to reach Abyssinia in the north and the Cape on the south, and they sailed for *Marabia*, no doubt a misprint for Iram-Arabia.

On August 21st they saw for the first time the land of India and the great city of *Combaen*, the Cambaeth

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of Marco Polo, the modern Cambay, on the river Cobar (Saubermattee).

The next station, called *Oan*, is no doubt Goa, where the Portuguese come into collision with the Indians, take 400 ships, and burn them after having killed their defenders. The island of *Auidibe*, where they took water and landed 300 of their invalids, is Anjcedeeva, which for a long time after was a station where all the Portuguese ships called before touching the continent of India.

The *Montebyl* of our author, in the kingdom of *Cannaer* (Cananor), is the Mount Ely of Marco Polo. There they watched for the Mecca ships, attacked the *Merii*, plundered it, killed and burnt all the people on board, on the 1st of October.

Our author does not say that in this action, so dishonourable for the memory of Vasco da Gama, the children from the captured ships were saved and brought on board the Admiral's caravel, as it was affirmed later by other historians.

On the 27th of October they sailed from Cananor, and arrived at *Calcoen* (in Sanscrit Khalikhodon, in English Calicut), where they fought during three days against the troops of the *Samudrya-radja* (the king of the sea-shore), whom early European writers call the *Zamorin*. Then, already, Flemish merchants, who had come through Egypt or Persia, were established in Calicut, as it is stated in King Manoel's "Copia de una lettera," (*Roma*, 1505):—Vi sono mercadāti

d' tutte ãlle parti e d' mercantia como Bruges ī Flan-
dria, Venetia ī Italia."

The barbarous device resorted to by Vasco da Gama of sending adrift towards the town a ship loaded with the cut heads, hands, and feet of his prisoners of war, has been related and censured as it deserves by later historians of the expedition.

The kingdom of Granor, mentioned as situate between *Calcoen* (Calicut) and *Kuffchāin* (Cochin) is no doubt that of Travancore, where our author says there were a great number of Christians and Jews, living under the same prince. Like all early travellers to India, Vasco da Gama and his companions mistook the sectators of Brama and Bouddha for Christians, because they worshipped the images of the Virgin Mary brought in the Portuguese ships, mistaking them for the representation of Maha Madja holding in her lap her son Shakya. The similarity of the name of the Indian goddess, no less than the aureolas surrounding the heads of the mother and son, induced the Portuguese to make the same mistake when they entered a native temple. No doubt there were at this time in the Indian Peninsula a certain number of Nestorians, but not so large as the Portuguese imagined. The figures of 25,000 Christians and 300 Christian churches given by our author as established at *Coloen* (Culan, Quilom), as well as the repugnance of the so-called Christians to deal, eat, or drink with persons of another creed, clearly show the mistake.

The town mentioned from hearsay as *Lapis* is Meliapour near Madras, where, according to a mediæval tradition, St. Thomas the Apostle was put to death, whilst another says it was in the town of Calamina, whence his body was transported to Edeffa, which our author calls *Ediffen*, stating it is four days' distant from Meliapour. The Portuguese maintain that having found the body of the saint in the ruins of the latter town, they carried it to Goa, where it is still worshipped; but this assertion is substantiated by very slender proofs indeed.

Our author calls the betel, *tombour*; whilst Alvaro Velho names it *atambor*, both being misnomers, from the page carrying the box which contains it being called *tombuldar*.

The civet-cat is so clearly described that it was impossible not to translate by *musc* the word *iubot*, although it is not to be found in any old or modern Flemish or Dutch dictionary.

In relating the second battle which Vasco da Gama, on his return from Cochin, fought with a single ship against the king of Calicut on the 12th of February, 1503, the Dutch narrator does not mention the timely arrival of Vicente Sodre, who with the remainder of the fleet decided the action, and prevented the defeat of Vasco da Gama. While the latter began his return voyage to Portugal, Sodre remained behind to blockade the Red Sea.

Whether the two islands, which the returning expedi-

tion fought on the 26th of March, were the famous male and female islands of Marco Polo, which have never been found since the days of the Venetian traveller, is uncertain; for Vasco da Gama, on account of the valuable goods which filled his ship, would not land there in spite of the incitements of the inhabitants.

The day of the return to Portugal is not mentioned by our author.

To sum up: this Dutch narrative, translated as literally as possible from the original, fixes many of the dates and facts already known, whilst, as said before, it supplies many new interesting details of the second voyage which the great Portuguese navigator made round the Cape of Good Hope.

The original book here reprinted, is noted in the Catalogue of the British Museum as printed at Antwerp in 1504(?), which may be ascertained by the comparison of the types with those of books printed at the same place and date, and the condition of the engraving of the Crucifixion at the end of the book, merely to fill a page, and which shows this peculiarity, that the inscription on the scroll, "*Deus q̄ pro redēptiōe*" is reversed; whilst the word INRI, at the top of the cross, is not reversed. The map of Africa supplied at the beginning of this Introduction, showing the two lakes where the Nile takes its source, does not belong to the book itself, but is taken from "Ptolemæi C. Tabula noua totius orbis," Lugduni 1541 fol.

Calcoen

Dit is die reyse die een man self bescreuen he
uer die seylde mit. lxx. sepe wt die riuier vā
lisboen in poertegael na Calcoen in Indien en ge
schiede int iaer. xv. C. en een. En seylde langes die
kust van barbarien en quamen voer een stat ghe
noemt Nef hebhl en worden daer of gheslaghen
mit grote schade en scande en wi verloren dair veel
kerste daer god die siel of moet hebben. Dese sady
gheschiede op sint Jacobs dach anno predicto

Dat slot leyt een mhl van die stad gheuoemt
Geraen en dair comen veel quade kersten coeplu
den van Venetgen en Senenen en vercopen dē
curche harnas bollen en ander tuch om teghen
die kersten te vechten en si hebbē daer haer stapel

It was sesmaendē aen die kust vā barbarien.
en leet veel armoede in die strate

Int iaer. xv. C. en tweedē. x. dach in Februario
so voeren wi wt die riuier van lisboen ende setten
ons koers na Indien.

Dat eerste land dat wi vondē was gheuoemt
Kenan. en sijn veel eplanden ende behoren meest
den coninck van spaengen en sijn wel. h. C. milen
van poertegael.

Wi sijn van daen gheuaren ende hebben ons
koers gheset supden ten oelsten. en sijn ghecomen
tot die cape daer wi bi nae ghebleuen waren en is
vā Poertegael wel. v. C. milē. Daer loept dat volc
al naect mannen en vrouwen en sijn swart. en en
hebbē gheen scaemte wāt si en dragen geen cleder

en die vrouwen houden haren mannen ghelijck
scemincelen. si en weten goet noch quaet.

Den .v. dach in Maerte hebbe wi ons hoerts
gheset suptwelf hondert milen in die zee.

Den .xiiij. dach in Maerte so voere wi in die zee
wel .xij. C. milen van Doertegael en dair verloren
wi die wagen en die sonne was boue onse hooft so
dat wi gheen scim of scae va ghenen dingen mocht
ten si en noch gheen hemel teike de .ij. dach in April

In dese zee sagten wi visschen vliegen met vlo/
ghelen also verre als men met een armboist mach
schieten en syn groot ghelijc een makereel of een
harinc of een sardijn. En wel drie hondert milē dū
rende saghen wi swarte meeuwen mit witte bor/
sten en hadden staerten ghelijc swanē en syn gro/
ter dan woudruen: dese vangen dese vliegghende
visschen al vliegghende

Den .xv. dach in April ware wi soe verre dat wi
sagen optē rechten middach die sonne int noorde

Op die selue tijt en hadde wi geen hemel teike
daer wi ons mede behelpen mochten noch sonne
noch manedā ons cōpasse en ons haerten

Daer nae quamen wi in een ander meer daer
en was niet leuens in noch visch noch vleysche of
pet anders

Den .xx. dach in April quam ons die wint con/
trari vijf weken lanc en brochte ons wten rechten
wech dusent milen en daer waren wi wel .xij. da/
ghen dat wi lanc noch sant en saghen.

Den xij. dach in Mepe walt daer winter en
die dagē en warē daer mer acht vren lant en twal
ser grote tempeest van reghen vā hagel van snee
van donre van blirein. Den hemel stont open te
ghen die cape de boensperanci en was onweeder
Als wi gheromen waren om die cape hebben wi
ons hoers gheset noertoost.

Den x. dach in Junio saghen wi weder om die
waghen ende die noortsterre ende hadden weder
kennisse vanden hemel waer om dat wi seer ver
blift waren.

Den xiiij. dach in iunio quamen wi aen een stat
ghenoemt Scasale en daer begheerde wi te ropen
en vercopē mer si en wilden ons niet ghedoghen
wāt si grote sorghe hebben voer paepians water
daer comt een riuiet wt paepians lant wāt paep
ians lant leit binnē dat lant beslotē vā die muere
en en heeft geen weganc vā die zee dan ope riuiet
vā scasale daer om waren si vūaert anct hebbende
dat wi dien wech vindē mochten want die coninc
van Scasale heeft alcht oerloghe teghen paepian.
want wi spraken mit volck wt paepians lant die
daer gheuangen waren en waren haer luyden
vauonen want paepians lant oueruloept in sil
uer gont en ghesteentē en rijkdomme en dese stat
lept. CCC. milen vande caep de boensperanci.

Andaen sijn wi gheuarē aen een eplant ghe
noemt Nil hebjt en leit. CCC. milen van scasale en
tlant is genoemt Maerabite en daer en kentmē
geengelt mer si mangelē gont siluer om and goet

Den xviij. dach in Julio sijn wi vā daer gheua
 ren en sijn gheromē aen een coninc ryc ghenoecht
 Hyplo en daer is een ryc coninc. en dien hebben wi
 bedwongen dat hi den coninc vā poertegael moet
 geuē iaerlijc xv. c. matcallē. elc matcallis vlaems
 ghelt. ix. s. iij. d. Noch heeft hi vanden seluē coninc
 een bannier in een repken dat hi hē kent voer sijn
 heer. Mer doe die coninc wt sijn hof quam so wor
 pen si hem mit water en rys ouer sijn hoeft en wa
 ren seer blide en sloeghen haer handen en songen
 en sprongen recht op. Die coninc en al volclopt
 naect mannen en vrouwen mer hebben een deet
 voer haer scamelheit en gaen hem alle daghewal
 schen in die zee Daer sijn offsonder hoerue mer
 hebben op haer rugghe ghelijc een sale. Daer sijn
 oec scapen met grote staertē dair gheen been in en
 is en die staert is beter dan half staep Daer sijn oec
 bontecrapen en sijn swart en wit Daer wassen oec
 vighen en sijn wel van twee hant breet

Den. xx. dach in Julio voeren wij vandaen en
 quamē aen een eplant ghenoecht Melijnde en is
 hondert milen van kilo. Mer wi hebben ghemist
 en sijn gheromē tot die cape sinte maria. en hebbē
 onse dingē dair gestelt en wi moestē dair ouer een
 goluewel. vij. c. milen wijt. Daer lieten wi paep
 ians lant leggen en lant vā Marabiazē was dē
 xxx. dach in iulio. En wi waren vandaer gheuarē
 c. milen doe setten wi ons koers noertoelt.

Men sal wetendat vanden april tot september
 alrijc daer winter is ende die wint waert dan sup
 a. iij.

oest althijt En van september totten april ist somer
en dan waept die wint althijt noertoest van elkeen
half iaer. Ende hoe die wint is soe is die stroom en
in dē somer ist seer quaet wesen wāt ic hebt besochte
een iaer lanc.

Opten vijftē dach in Augusto saghen wy die
noortsterre daer wij blyde om waren want wi en
waren doe mer vijf hondert milen van Indien

Wij seplden in xv. daghen ouer dat grote golt
van. vij. C. en lxx. milen opten. xxi. dach is augusto
dat wi saghen clant van Indien en sagen een gro-
te stadt ghenoeint Combaen en is een grote coop-
stat en leit aen clant van Caldēn daer babilonien
in leyt op die riuijē van Gobar

Aen die lant verbi hoech arabien leit die stade
Mecha daer machomet leit die hepdens duuel en
die stadt leyt. vi. C. milen van orientē daer die spe-
rieren paerlen ghesteenten in onsen landē comen
ouer een golf.

Wi voeren verbi een stat ghenoeint Dan en
daer is een coninc Dese coninc had wel vijf. duisent
paerden en. vij. C. olifanten van wapen alleen in
lant En elke stadt heeft sijn coninc en wij namen
daer. iij. C. schepen van die stat Dan en sloegē dat
volk doot en branden die schepen

Dan daen sijn wi ghenarē en sijn gecomē in eē
eplāt ghenoeint Muidibe daer namē wij water en
hout en wi brochten onse siecken aen lant wel. iij.
C. en wi dodē daer eē haerhondē wel vā v. voetē lāc

Den xi. dach in september sijn wi vā daen ghe-
comē in een conincric gheuoemt Canuaer en leyt
aen een ghebercht gheuoemt Montebpl. en daer
wachten wi die scpen van Metha en dat sijn dpe
scpen die die spererien ouer brengen in onsen lan-
den en die wouden wi verderuen en soe soude die
coninc van Doertegaer alleen die spererie daer ge-
haelt hebben. mer wi en condent niet volbrengen
Mer die selue tijt namen wien scip van Metha
daer waren in drie hondert mannē en tachtich en
veel vrouwen en kinderen En wi namen daer wt
wel. xij. duisent ducaten en noch wel x. duisent an co-
manscap En wi verbranden dat scip en al dat volc
te puluer den eersten dach in october

Daer sijn oerharten die hebben oer grote hoor-
nen en gaen recht op van haer hooft ende sijn ghe-
draept ghelijc een visel.

Den. xx. dach in october ghinghen wi op elant
van Canuaer en maecten daer roep van alle spere-
rien en die coninc ontfinc ons mit groter staet en
brocht voer hē twee olifanten en meer and vrent
de beesten die ic niet nomen en en

Den. xxvij. dach in october voerē wi van daer
en sijn geromē aen eē conincric gheuoemt Caloen
en leit xl. milē vā Cānaer daer sijn wi voer die stat
gaen leggen met onser macht en sloegē met hē. iij.
dagen en vingen veel volcs en hingen die aen die
repen vanden scpe en namen die weder en sloe-
ghen hē handē en voerē en choest of. en namē een

van haer ſcepen en wopen die hande en voete en
hoofde daer in en maecten eenē brief en ſetten dye
op een ſtoc en lieten dat ſcip antlant drinē. Wina
men daer een ſcip en ſtake vier daer in en vbran
den veel van des conincs onderſaten.

Den. ij. dach in nouember voeren wi van Ca
loen lx. milen aen een ſtat ghenoeit Cuſichyn en
tuſſchen deſe twee ſteden lept een kerſten ſtat ghe
noemt Granor en daer ſyn veel goede kerſten. en
in die ſtat wonen veel ioden en hebben een prince
daer ſi onder ſtaen ſo ſyn oec alle die ioden van die
lande onder den ſelue prince. En die kerſte en heb
ben mit niemant te doen en ſyn goede kerſten en
en copen noch en vertopē niet op heplighe dagen
noch en eten noch en drincken mit niemāt dā met
kerſten. Si quamen wel in onſe ſcepe mit hoende
ren mit ſcapen en deden ons goet hier. En hebbē
nu prietſters aen den paeus ghelonden te ſcomen
om te weten dat rechte gheloue

Den. xxvij. dach in nouēber ghingen wi aent
lant vā Cuſichyn om mitten coninc te ſpreken. en
die coninc quam bi ons met grote ſtaet en brochte
met hē. vi. olifantē van wapen want hi heeft veel
olifanten in ſyn lant en veel vreemde beeste dye ic
niet en kenne. So hebben onſe heren die wi bi ons
hadden metten coninc ghelproken om die ſcep te
in aken van ſpeterie en ander dinghen.

Den. ij. dach in ianuario ſyn wi van daen ghe
uaren tot een ſtadt die hiet Coloen. en daer comeu
veel goede kerſten en hebben ons ghedaen. ij. ſce

pen mit specerie en der kerste ider welc xv. duisent
en gheuen tribuyt ghelijc die iode mit ons en heb
ben daer wel. CCC. kersten kerken ende lijn ghe
noemt naden apostelen en ander heiligen. Van
Coloen. I. milen lept een eplāt en hiet Steloen en
daer wast die beste canteel diemen vint.

Van Coloen. vi. dachuaert lept een stadt ende
hiet Tapis en daer bi lept sinte Thomas in die zee,
daermen. xliij. dagen omtrent sinen dach doer die
zee droechs voets ingaet En gheeft een peghelick
dier waerdich is theilighe sacrament. ende ontrec
ket den ghenen diet onwaerdich sijn En dit is vier
dachuaerden van die grote stat van Edissen daer
hi dat grote pallaes maecte. Mer dese stadt voer/
screue Tapis is meest alghedestruert en die ker/
sten woenen daer mede op tribuyt. ende al volck
loeft naect coninc coninghinne dan dat si haer sca
melheit bedecken.

Van Coloen. viij. C. milen lept een grote stadt
ghenoemt Melath ende van daer comen die bes
te naghelen en noten muscaten ende ander costel
ijcke comanscap en ghessteente.

Dat volck van die landen hebben swarte tant/
den want si eten bladeren van boemen ende wie
dinck oft crijt waer met die bladen ende daer wor
den haer tanden of swart ende is ghenoemt tong
boer ende hebbent alcht bi hem waer dat si gaen
of reysen. Die peper wast ghelijck die wijngaert
doet met ons.

In die landen sijn catten soe groot als met ons

possen ende van hem comt die iubot en is seer costelijc want een cat is waert hondert ducaten ende dpe iubot wast tusschen haer beenen onder haer start.

Die gengenauer wast alst riet doet en die caneel als grienden, en alle iaer scilt men die caneel ende hoe hi dunre en nieuwer is so si beter is Die rechte somer is in december en in ianuario.

Den xij. dach in Februario so sloeghen wi met ten coninc van Calcoen met xxxv. scpen behaluen dieroepscpe. in elcroepscip mocht wesen lx of lxx. man en wij en hadden bouen xxij. man nyet ende god gaf ons die gracie en wi sloegen ons daer doer En namen daer twee grote scpen van hē en sloeghen alt volc doot en branden die scpen voer dpe stat van Calcoen daer die coninc teghenwoerdich was. En des anderen daechs ghinghen wi weder tsepl na Cannair ende maecten ons rede te varen nae Boertegael Dit gheschiede anno. xv. C. en. iij. opten. xij. dach in Februario.

Den. xxij. dach in maert nader sonnen onderganc was si noorden en wi verlore die noortsterre opten. xij. dach in maerte

Wi vonden opten xxvi. dach in maert. ij. eplan den mer wi en wilden dair niet aen om dat wi nic costelike goeden gheladden waren. en als tvolc vanden landen dat sagen dat wi daer niet en quamen maecten si groot vier dat wi aen comen souden

Opten. x. dach in April so sagen wy wedpaepias

lant en doe hadde wi. xlvij. dage opt golf getweert

Den. xij. dach in April so lagen wi dat lant vā
Nef hebjl voer of ghescreuen en daer laghen wi
totte xvi. dach in Junio en wi sijn vā daen seylt ge
gaen en dan sijn die dagen alder cortste.

Daer leyt een groot conincric gheuoemt Co/
loen voerscreuē daer wassen die paerle in manier
vā woesterē in die zee. mer die zee en is bouē iij. of
vijf vaem niet diep. En daer sijn visschers diese mit
houtē pramen visschē sereēde die pramen op haer
mont of nose en vallē dan onder water wāt si mo
ghen wel eē quartier vā eē vre onō water. en als si
wat gheuange hebbe comē si bouē en so voert an.

Den. xij. dach in Junio begonst ons broot en
vitali te begheuen en wi waren doe noch wel xviij
C. en lxxx. milen van liff boen.

Den. xxx. dach in Junio so vonden wij een ey/
lant en daer sloegen wi wel. iij. C. mensche doot en
vinghender veel en namen dair water en voeren
van daerden eersten dach in Augusto.

Den. xij. dach in Augusto lagen wi weder ope
noordsterre en doe hadden wi wel noch. vi. C. milē
van Poertegael.

Int laer. xv. C. en. ij. verloren die onghelouige
C. en lxxx. schepen mer en hadden si die schepen niet
quijt gheweest so hadden wi daer qualijc aen ghe
weest want si waren onse vanden.

En alsoe quamen wy weder om behouden in
Poertegael.

Deo gratias.



(Facsimile by Armagnac & Co., 215, Seymour Street, Euston Square.)



Calicut.



HIS is the voyage which a man wrote himself, how far he sailed with seventy ships from the river of Lisbon, in Portugal, to go to Calicut in India, and this occurred in the year 1501. And they sailed along the coast of Barbary, and came before a town called Meskebijn,¹ and were there defeated with great loss and dishonour, and we lost there many Christians, whose souls God must have had. This battle took place the day of St. James, of the above said year.

That castle is one mile from the town called Oeraen,² and there come many wicked Christian merchants from Venice and Genoa, and they sell to the Turks suits of armour, arquebusses, and ammunition to fight against the Christians, and they have there their staple.

I was six months on the coast of Barbary, and suffered much misery in the Straits.³

¹ Mers el Kebir.

² Oran.

³ Of Gibraltar?

In the year 1502, on the 10th day of February, we failed from the river of Lisbon, and took our course to India.

The first land which we found was called Kenan,¹ and there are many islands which mostly belong to the King of Spain, and they are well 200 miles from Portugal.

We failed thence, and directed our course to south-east, and arrived at the cape,² near which we had remained, and it is well 500 miles from Portugal. The people there walk stark naked, men and women, and they are black. And they have no shame, for they wear no clothes, and the women have converse with their men like monkeys, and they know neither good nor evil.

On the 5th day of March we directed our course by south-west, 100 miles out at sea.

On the 29th day of March we were sailing at least 1,200 miles from Portugal, and there we lost sight of the Great Bear, and the sun was above our head, so that we could not see the shadow of anything, nor any mark in the sky on the 2nd day of April.

In that sea we saw fishes flying with the birds, as far as a man may shoot with a cross bow; and they are as big as a mackerel, a herring, or a pilcher. And

¹ Cape Nun, on the coast opposite the Canaries.

² Cape de Verde.

during a course of at least 300 miles, we saw black gulls with white throats; their tail is like that of a swan, and they are bigger than wood pigeons; they were catching the flying fishes as they were flying.

On the 11th of April we were so far, that precisely at noon we saw the sun to the north.

At the same time we had in the sky no mark which could help us, neither sun nor moon, but our compass and our maps.

Then we came to another sea, where there was nothing living, neither fish nor flesh, nor anything else.

On the 20th day of April the wind turned against us, and lasted five weeks, driving us a thousand miles out of the direct route, and we were fairly twelve days without sighting any land or sand.

On the 22nd day of May, there was winter there, and the days lasted only eight hours; and there was a great storm of rain, hail, snow, thunder and lightning. The sky was open towards the Cape of Good Hope, and there was a storm. When we were arrived near the Cape, we directed our course to the north-east.

On the 10th day of June we could see neither the Great Bear nor the Polar Star, and we did not know the sky, which threw us in great perplexity.

*Saw again
again hunt*

Great, reddish or

On the 14th of June we arrived before a town called Scafal,¹ and there we asked to buy and sell;

¹ Sofala.

but they would not allow it to us, because the inhabitants felt great anxieties from the side of the Paepians' river;¹ there flows a river from the country of the Paepians,² for the country of the Paepians³ is situate in the interior of that country, shut by the walls, and they have no other issue towards the sea than the river of Scafal, and they were disturbed with anxiety lest we might discover that road; because the King of Scafal was then making war against the Paepians. For we spoke with the people of the Paepians' country, who had been made prisoners, and were their slave people; for the Paepians' country abounds in silver, gold, precious stones and riches, and this kingdom is 400 miles from the Cape of Good Hope.

Thence we sailed for an island called Miskebije,⁴ and it is 200 miles from Scafal, and the country is called Maerabite, and there they do not know money, but they exchange gold and silver for other goods.

On the 18th of July we sailed thence and arrived in a kingdom called Hylo,⁵ and here is a king very rich, and him we compelled to pay 1,500 matcals annually to the King of Portugal; each matcall is worth in Flemish money 9 l. 4 pence. He has, moreover, from the same king a banner, as a mark that he

¹ Zara or Cuama.

² Sabia, between the Cape and 20° S.

⁴ Mozambique.

³ Kaffir land.

⁵ Quiloa.

recognises him for his sovereign. But when the king came out from his court, they threw water and small branches over his head, and they were very merry and clapped their hands, and sung and danced. The king and all the people, men and women, walk naked, but they have a piece of stuff round their loins, and they go every day to wash themselves in the sea. There are here oxen without horns, but they have like a saddle on their back. There are also sheep with big tails as there were never such, and the tail is better than the half of the sheep. There are also crows which are black and white; there grow also ~~onions~~ ^{figs} which are nearly two palms wide.

On the 20th of July we sailed thence, and arrived in an island called Melinda,¹ which is 100 miles from Kilo. But we missed it, and went to the Cape of Saint Mary.² There we put our things in order, and we had still to cross a gulf which is well 700 miles wide. There we left the country of the Paepians,³ and arrived before the country of Marabia,⁴ and it was the 30th day of July. And after having sailed 100 miles, we shaped our course to the north-east.

It must be known that there is winter all the time from April to September, and then the wind blows

¹ Melinda, not an island.

² Ras Mory, Socotra.

³ In early maps Caffraria is limited by Abyssinia.

⁴ Iram-Arabia?

from the south-east during the whole time ; and from September to April it is summer, and the wind blows during the whole time from the north-east, from each a half year. And as is the wind so is the current, and the summer is of a very bad kind, for I suffered by it for a whole year.

On the 5th day of August we saw the Polar Star, and were very glad of it, for we were still more than 500 miles from India.

In fifteen days we sailed across the great gulf of 770 miles, and it was on the 21st day of August we saw the land of India, and saw a great city called Combaen,¹ and it is a large trading town, and it is situate near the country of Caldea or Babylon, on the river of Cobar.²

Near the land beyond High Arabia is the town of Mecha, where is buried Mahomet, the devil of the pagans ; and the town is 600 miles from the east, whence spices, pearls, and precious stones are brought to our country after crossing a gulf.

We passed beyond a town called Oan,³ and there is a king ; this king has at least 8,000 horses and 700 elephants of war alone in his country ; and each town has his own king, and we took 400 ships from Oan, and we killed the people and burnt the ships.

Thence we sailed and arrived in an island called

¹ Cambay.

² Saubermattee.

³ Goa.

Avidibe;¹ there we took in water and wood, and we landed at least 300 of our invalids, and we killed a lizard which was at least five feet long.

On the 11th day of September we arrived in a kingdom called Canaer,² and it is situate near a chain of mountains called Montebyl,³ and there we watched the ships of Meccha, and they are ships which carry the spices which come to our country, and we spoiled the woods, so that the King of Portugal alone should get spices from there. But it was impossible for us to accomplish our design. Nevertheless at the same time we took a Meccha ship, on board of which were 380 men and many women and children, and we took from it at least 12,000 ducats and at least 10,000 more worth of goods, and we burnt the ship and all the people on board with gun powder, on the first day of October.

Here also are stags, which have also large horns which rise straight from their head, and they are twisted like a screw.

On the 20th day of October we went to the country of Canaer,⁴ and bought there all kinds of spices, and the king came in great state, bringing with him two elephants and several strange animals which I cannot name.

On the 27th day of October we sailed thence, and

¹ Anjeedeeva.

² Cananor.

³ Mont Ely of Marco Polo.

⁴ Cananor.

arrived in a kingdom called Calcoen,¹ which is 40 miles from Cannaer, and we mustered our forces before the town, and we fought with them during three days, and we took a great number of people, and we hanged them to the yards of the ships, and taking them down, we cut off their hands, feet, and heads; and we took one of their ships and threw into it the hands, feet, and heads, and we wrote a letter, which we put on a stick, and we left that ship to go a-drift towards the land. We took there a ship which we put on fire, and burnt many of the subjects of the king.

On the 2nd day of November we sailed from Calcoen 60 miles to a kingdom called Cuffchaïn;² and between these two towns is a Christian kingdom called Granor,³ and there are many good Christians; and in this kingdom live many Jews, and they have a prince there. You understand that all the Jews of the country are also subjects of the same prince. And the Christians have nothing to do with any body, and they are good Christians. They neither sell nor buy anything during the consecrated days, and they neither eat nor drink with anybody but Christians. They willingly came to our ships with fowls and sheep, and caused us to make good cheer. They had just sent priests to the pope at Rome to know the true faith.

On the 28th day of November we went to the

¹ Calicut.

² Cochin.

³ Travancore.

country of Cuffchain to speak with the king; and the king came to us in great state, bringing with him six war elephants; for he has many elephants in his country, and many strange animals which I do not know. Then our chiefs which we had with us spoke to the king, in order to buy spices and other things.

On the 3rd day of January we sailed thence for a town which is called Coloën,¹ and there came many good Christians, and they filled two of our ships with spices; and there are nearly 25,000 Christians, and they paid us a tribute like the Jews. There are nearly 300 Christian churches, and they bear the names of the apostles and other saints. Fifty miles from Coloën is an island which is called Steloun,² where is to be found the best cinnamon which can be met with.

Six days from Coloën² is a town which is called Lapis,³ and near by is Saint Thomas in the sea. It is there that for a fortnight about the time of his festival the sea may be passed on foot, and they give the sacrament to all who are worthy to receive it, and refuse it to the unworthy. And this place is four days distant from the great city of Edissen,⁴ where he built the large palace. But this above-mentioned town of Lapis is

¹ Culan, Quilom.

² Ceylon.

³ Meliapour.

⁴ Edeffe.

for the most part ruined, and the Christians inhabit it on condition of paying a tribute, and everybody, including the king and the queen, walk naked, with the exception of their loins, which are covered.

Eight hundred miles from Coloén is a large town called Melatk,¹ whence come the best cloves and nutmegs, valuable goods, and precious stones.

The people of this country have black teeth, because they eat the leaves of the trees and a white thing like chalk actually with the leaves, and it comes from it that the teeth become black, and that is called tom-bour,² and they carry it always with them wherever they go or are travelling. The pepper grows as the vine does in our country.

There are in the country cats as big as our foxes, and it is from them that the musk comes, and it is very dear, for a cat is worth 100 ducats, and the musk grows between his legs, under his tail.

Ginger grows as a reed, and cinnamon as a willow; and every year they strip the cinnamon from its bark, however thin it is, and the youngest is the better. The true summer is in December and January.

On the 12th of February we fought with the king of Calcoén, who had thirty-five ships, besides the rowing boats. In each of these boats were about sixty to seventy men, and we had no more than twenty-two

¹ Malacca ?

² Betel.

men, and with that, thanks to God, we beat them ; and we took two large ships, and slaughtered all the people that were in them, and burnt the ships before the town of Calcoen, where the king was present ; and the next day we sailed for Cannaer, and prepared everything to return to Portugal. That happened in 1503, the 12th day of February.

On the 22nd day of March, after the setting of the sun, it was on the north, and the 13th day of March we had lost the polar star.

On the 26th day of March we made out two islands, but we did not choose to land there, because we were loaded with valuable goods, and as the people of the country saw that we would not land, they lighted a large fire to attract us.

On the 10th of April we saw again the country of the Paepians, and then we had been forty-eight days in the gulf.

On the 13th day of April we saw the country of Meskebaïl,¹ previously mentioned, and we remained there till the 16th day of June, and thence we sailed again ; and that is the time when the days are shortest.

There is a great kingdom called Coloen, previously described. There the pearls grow in a kind of oyster in the sea ; but the sea is no more than four to seven

¹ Mozambique.

fathoms deep, and there are fishermen who fish them with wooden baskets. They put the baskets in their mouth or on their nose, and then go down under the water, where they may remain nearly a quarter of an hour, and when they have caught something they come back to the surface, and so on.

On the 14th day of June bread and victuals began to fail us, and we still were nearly 1,780 miles from Lisbon.

On the 30th day of June we found an island, where we killed at least 300 men, and we caught many of them, and we took there water and departed thence on the 1st day of August.

On the 13th day of August we saw again the polar star, and we still were well 600 miles from Portugal.

In the year 1502 the infidels lost 180 ships; but if the ships had not been lost, we should have been very badly off, for they were our enemies.

And thus we came back healthy and safe to Portugal.

DEO GRATIAS.



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